

policy toward them. That he himself was not fully weaned from faith in the pagan gods is claimed by some, and it may be true to a certain extent, but, in the main, he upheld and spread the principles of Christianity.

At the time of his death, however, his son, Constantius, came into possession of the Roman empire. His policy was just the opposite of his father's. He made all who would not accept Christianity, in the eastern part of the empire, leave the realm or suffer death, and thus the new faith became more firmly established in the East, but it lost its hold on the people, who now hated it because of Constantius' persecutions. In the West, however, he did not adopt so bold an attitude, and was more tolerant. Many of the old Roman families who held to the pagan faith were powerful and influential, and he could not risk the sacrifice of their friendship, and so allowed them freedom of belief. By his tolerant policy in the Western part of his empire, pagan superstitions became mixed with the new faith, and so corrupted it that it was not recognized in the East as pure. Naturally, this pagan tendency caused the Church life to degenerate to a great extent, and this reached its climax under the emperor Julian, called the Apostate, the cousin of Constantius, who succeeded to the empire. His eager mind, naturally imaginative, made him a suitable leader for this degenerate type of Christianity. He secretly embraced the pagan faith, and as supreme pontiff personally conducted ceremonies and sacrifices. He tolerated Christianity, but in order to bring it into disrepute he encouraged all other religions and all sectarian controversies. It seemed that the Christian faith in the Roman empire was doomed, but with Julian's death, and the tolerant policy of the next emperor, it again became prominent, and from this time the pagan religion seemed to lose its hold, and slowly weakened before the more powerful Christian faith.

A new danger now faced the Roman emperors. The West Goths, on their borders, had adopted Christianity, through the preaching of Ulphilas, who had gone into their country as a missionary from the East. He became a bishop, and had great success as a leader among the West Goths. He desired to penetrate with his preaching into the country of the East Goths, but they would not receive him. His people were persecuted by the East Goths and he obtained permission to bring a party of his West Goths across the Danube for protection, and thus they came into the limits of the Roman empire. They became greatly incensed at the avarice and intolerance of some of the Roman nobles, and Valens, Emperor of the East, was killed. The empire seemed to be tottering, and only by the skill of Theodosius, hastily